

REMARKS

Examiner's Rejections and Objections

The subject patent application is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/198,567 which was filed on July 18, 2002 and has presently received a Notice of Allowance from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. The purpose of this application is to prosecute original Claims 20-44 which were cancelled during the prosecution of the earlier-filed '567 patent application.

A single Office Action was issued in the prosecution of the '567 application. In that Office Action, the Examiner first objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) as failing to show certain features of dependent Claims 6, 8, 24 and 26. To fully resolve this issue in the present prosecution, those claims have now been cancelled.

Further in that Office Action, the Examiner pointed out certain deficiencies in the Abstract. Applicant has duly rectified its Abstract in a manner consistent with the Examiner's suggestions. Thus, this issue should now be resolved in the present prosecution.

The Examiner also objected to Claims 1, 13, 20, 31 and 38 as containing various informalities. In order to address and alleviate such claim objections in this prosecution, Applicant

has cancelled Claims 1 and 13, and further amended Claims 20, 31 and 38 to correct the minor informalities pointed out therein.

Moreover, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-14, 19, 38, 39 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Castellano reference ("Castellano"). The Examiner further rejected Claims 5, 11, 20-32 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Castellano.

Claims 15, 16, 33, 34, 40 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Castellano in view of the Opel reference. Lastly, the Examiner rejected Claims 17, 18, 35, 36, 42 and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Castellano in view of the Burbine reference.

Importantly, however, the Examiner indicated his reasons for allowing the claims of the '567 application in the Notice of Allowability issued therefor. In stating the reasons for their allowability, the Examiner stated the following:

The primary reason for the indication of the allowability of claims 1-5, 7, 9-12, 14-19 and 23 are . . . a plurality of first conductive path forming a first electrical circuit with the at least one slot and individual wires of the first set of wires; and a plurality of second conductive paths forming a second electric circuit with

individual wires of the second set of wires,
wherein the first and second circuit are
electrically isolated from each other . . .

This limitation . . . is neither disclosed
nor taught by the prior art of record, alone
or in combination. (See, Notice of
Allowability, page 2).

As will be demonstrated below, it is respectfully submitted
that the presently pending claims, and more particularly
independent Claims 20 and 38, have been amended to incorporate
such features deemed allowable by the Examiner, and thus should
share the same fate as the earlier-filed '567 patent
application.

Summary of Applicant's Response

Applicant has cancelled original Claims 1-19 from the
present prosecution.

Applicant is now concentrating solely upon original Claims
20-44 which were cancelled during the prosecution of the '567
patent application. From those claims, independent Claims 20
and 38 were amended to incorporate allowable subject matters
which are believed to overcome all of the prior art references
cited in the earlier prosecution.

Amended Independent Claims 20 and 38

Applicant has amended independent Claims 20 and 38 to incorporate distinguishable features which are believed to be novel and unobvious over the cited prior art. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully points out that amended independent Claims 20 and 38 are well within the Examiner's reasoning for allowing the earlier-filed '567 patent application.

As noted above, it appears that the Examiner granted the '567 application such status under the reasoning that the specific features of "a plurality of first conductive path forming a first electrical circuit with the at least one slot and individual wires of the first set of wires; and a plurality of second conductive paths forming a second electric circuit with individual wires of the second set of wires, wherein the first and second circuit are electrically isolated from each other" are novel and unobvious in view of all the prior art found by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claims 20 and 38 expressly contain those features, and thus should be allowable.

Nonetheless, as will be demonstrated below, Applicant submits that amended base Claims 20 and 38 are distinguishable over the cited prior art as they clearly contain features that are novel and unobvious.

1. Applicant's Present Invention

As recited in amended independent Claims 20 and 38, the present invention is directed toward a power distribution system with a specially-designed hub. More particularly, the hub utilized in the present invention has a first electric circuit and a second electric circuit which are electrically isolated from each other. Such configuration is best illustrated in Applicant's Figure 9. As shown therein, separate electrically isolated circuits (labeled as Circuit 2 and Circuit 6) are provided by first and second conductive paths (labeled as 250 and 252). Advantageously, this allows two distinct circuits to be formed, that is, a first circuit that includes the first set of wires 202 and a second circuit that includes the second set of wires 204.

2. The Castellano References In View of the Present Invention

Applicant limits its analysis solely to Castellano as other prior art references, namely, Opel and Burbine, were cited for propositions unrelated to the features of independent Claims 20 and 38. To the extent that Opel and Burbine were not cited against any of the features of base Claims 20 and 38, Applicant respectfully submits that Castellano is the only prior art of relevance to the amended independent claims of the present prosecution.

Even though Castellano may be directed to an apparatus of analogous art, it is not believed to disclose first and second electrically isolated circuits in a hub as recited in the present invention. As understood, Castellano merely discloses apertures for passing wires for a single circuit, not two independent circuits. For example, Castellano permits wires to pass to the back of receptacle 30 through apertures 74 or 94/98.

Nevertheless, it is clear from Castellano's figures that Castellano only provides a single circuit. Castellano's Figure 4 illustrates wires 20, 22 passing through aperture 74 to be connected to screws 76, 86. However, these wires 20, 22 comprise only a single circuit, namely, powerlines 20 and ground 22. Even if additional wires were threaded through apertures 94/98 to the back of receptacle 30, Applicant submits that Castellano apparently provides no additional conductive paths for such wires that would be electrically isolated (i.e., independent) of the first set of wires.

As such, Applicant respectfully submits that Castellano fails to teach or suggest first and second electrically isolated circuits in a hub as recited in amended base Claims 20 and 38 of the present invention. Thus, amended independent Claims 20 and 38 are believed to be clearly novel and unobvious over their cited prior art reference.

Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claims 20 and 38 are allowable. Insofar as amended base Claims 20 and 38 are viewed to be allowable, their respective dependent claims are also believed to be allowable as they are further limitations thereof.

Request for Allowance

On the basis of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all the stated grounds of objections and rejections have been overcome, and that Claims 20-23, 25 and 27-47 are in condition for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any suggestions for expediting allowance of the application, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 7/24/03

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